



THE ROLE OF SPEECH ACT THEORY IN THE ANALYSIS OF A RULER'S SPEECH

Kodirjonova Zohida Akromjon kizi

3rd year doctoral student at Andijan State University

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3253-9852>

qodirjonovazohida9@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

When crafting a speech of state significance delivered by a specific individual within a literary work, a writer must possess a distinctive linguistic style and command of language. This is because the text serves as the primary medium through which the speaker—the author—conveys their thoughts and ideas to the listener—the reader—specifically by articulating the sentiments intended to be expressed through the character's speech.

Currently, the pragmatic analysis of the speeches of heads of state in real time has become a topical issue in global pragmalinguistics. For instance, a recent article in the “Journal of Pragmatics”—which presents a pragmalinguistic analysis of King Abdullah II’s Twitter posts—asserts that a ruler’s speech is not merely a text composed of words, but a vehicle for political power.[2] Naturally, crafting such potent texts requires speakers to possess a specific level of linguistic and pragmatic expertise. In the realm of political discourse, national leaders’ speeches significantly influence citizens’ beliefs and actions. [9] These speeches are not merely collections of words; they are deliberately constructed to fulfill specific functions and convey deeper meanings that extend beyond literal interpretation.[6] The language employed by leaders, particularly during pivotal moments in a nation’s history, aims to inspire, reassure, and unite society. [1] In political discourse, “framing” is achieved through various rhetorical strategies, including the use of metaphors, narratives, and selective emphasis on specific facts. [11] Charteris-Black highlights that metaphors possess the power to contextualize political issues by linking them to widely understood concepts, thereby making it possible shaping public perception and reaction. [12] Political speeches integrate strategic messaging, emotional resonance and language to achieve predetermined goals. ...is a distinct genre of writing.[13] These objectives include identifying sociopolitical issues and fostering a sense of national identity and solidarity.[3] Pragmatic analysis focuses on how speakers utilize language to achieve communicative goals and convey meaning, considering various variables such as situational context, the listener’s interpretations, the relationships between participants, and the speaker’s intentions. [5] To this end, pragmatic analysis moves beyond the literal meaning of words to understand how meaning is constructed, how implicature arises, and how language performs actions in social situations.[7] Speech act theory can be viewed as a robust framework for analyzing how language is employed to achieve political objectives in the context of political texts. In conducting this analysis, we

relied on the speech act theories of J. L. Austin and John Searle. Speech act theory enables scholars to analyze a wide range of actions performed through political discourse.

The emergence of Speech Act Theory marked a major milestone in the field of pragmatics research. Given the close interconnection between pragmatics and discourse analysis, the study of pragmatics cannot be considered complete without taking discourse analysis into account. Indeed, political discourse has long been a significant area of language use that attracts scholarly interest. This is because political discourse is a complex social process worthy of critical study, particularly in light of the vital role it plays in the governance and structure of society. During the second half of the 20th century, fundamental research emerged in several directions within modern linguopragmatics regarding the study of human speech activity. One of the most significant of these is Speech Act Theory—associated with J.L. Austin and rooted in Ludwig Wittgenstein’s concept of “language games.” The essence of this theory lies in understanding that linguistic expression is not merely a means of describing events and phenomena in the world or assessing their truth or falsity; rather, it is a process directed at responding to these events and, through that response, achieving specific communicative goals and actions. One of the founders of Speech Act Theory, J.L. According to Austin, when any thought is uttered or expressed in writing, it conveys not only its semantic meaning but also a specific action; that is, it conveys information about an event (which may be affirmed or denied), makes a request, issues a prohibition, command, or piece of advice, grants permission, offers a promise or proposal, expresses courtesy or gratitude, and so forth.[8] All of these constitute the pragmatic intent of the communicants or the author of the work. Thus, a speech act is the realization of the communicants’ thoughts—in a specific context and for a specific purpose—through either oral or written form. The content of a speech act takes shape as the meaning of the expressed thought is perceived and “enriched” by the speaker/author and the listener/reader within the context of the communicative text. In this process, the speech act also performs functions that generate the text and structure the discourse. [10] Speech acts are realized through both linguistic and extralinguistic means, and the vast majority of researchers acknowledge that a speech act consists of three stages: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts.

In conclusion, the analysis of speech act theory constitutes a crucial component in the study of a ruler’s discourse. This is because every head of state employs various illocutionary units to ensure that their speech is both convincing and effective. The analysis focuses primarily on the pragmatic strategies utilized in the discourse, examining elements such as first-person references, metaphorical language, repetition, the selection of terminology, and the use of pragmatic language. The study demonstrates that the discourse of Sohিবqiron stands out as a remarkable example, characterized by powerful linguistic components that play a vital role in the effective communication of political messages.

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